

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Seattle, Washington

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

March 2003



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Seattle, Washington**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population (2000 Census): 563,374
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 67.9% white; 8.3% black/African American; 0.9% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.5% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 13.0% Asian; 0.3% other race; 3.9% two or more races; 5.3% Hispanic/Latino (any race)
- Seattle is located in King County.

### **Politics**

- Mayor: Greg Nickels<sup>2</sup>
- City Council (Positions 1-9, respectively): Judy Nicastro, Richard Conlin, Peter Steinbrueck, Jan Drago, Margaret Pageler, Nick Licata, Heidi Wills, Richard McIver, Jim Compton<sup>3</sup>
- Seattle Chief of Police: Gil Kerlikowske<sup>4</sup>
- King County Sheriff: Dave Reichert<sup>5</sup>

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)<sup>6</sup>  
Designated in 1997, the Northwest HIDTA is responsible for the following Washington counties: Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, and Yakima. Major drug threats in this area include heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, and cocaine.
- Project Link (Leading Integrated Networks in King County)<sup>7</sup>  
Project LINK is an innovative initiative focused on community coalition building to combat drugs and violence. This project creates and sustains effective linkages between law enforcement agencies and grass roots coalitions. The primary strategy of Project LINK is to educate rental property owners and motel owners about the threat of drug trafficking on their premises.
- Chronic Public Inebriate (CPI) Systems Solutions Workgroup<sup>8</sup>  
The CPI Systems Solutions Workgroup is a public-private partnership of concerned citizens and public servants who work to improve the conditions of life for CPIs who inhabit the Seattle area and who live with the social conditions caused by homelessness and public drinking and drugged behavior.
- Comprehensive Communities Program (CCP)<sup>9</sup>  
CCP promotes the engagement of local and state governments, the private sector, and neighborhoods in addressing violent crime, drug use and abuse, and the quality of life in local communities. Seattle is one of the sixteen jurisdictions involved in CCP. Some of the efforts used in the Seattle CCP include the School Emphasis Team, the Youth Employability Program, Youth Academy, and the Making the Most Out of Out-of-School Time program.

- The Seattle/King County Public Health Department has inaugurated a partnership program with a number of local pharmacies to expand injection drug users' access to syringes through pharmacy sales.<sup>10</sup>

### **Federal Funding**

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in Seattle:<sup>11</sup>
  - FY 2001 and FY 2002: no Seattle grantees
  - FY 2000: \$100,000 to the King County Department of Community Human Services
  - FY 1999: \$100,000 to the Seattle Public Schools Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee Partnership
  - FY 1998: no Seattle grantees
- SafeFutures<sup>12</sup>

In 1996, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention awarded SafeFutures grants to six communities, one of which was Seattle. Each community received funding (\$1.4 million a year for five years) to be used to enhance existing efforts aimed at reducing youth violence and delinquency. The target areas of the Seattle SafeFutures are the low-income neighborhoods of Central Area, the International District, Delridge and Southeast Seattle/Rainier Valley.
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed<sup>13</sup>

There are currently two Weed and Seed sites located in Seattle.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FY 2001 Discretionary Funds received in Seattle:<sup>14</sup>
  - Center for Mental Health Services
    - \$150,000 to Asian Counseling and Referral Services. The project period is 9/30/01-9/29/02.
    - \$1,250,104 to the King County Department of Community and Human Services. The project period is 9/30/98-8/31/04.
    - \$675,552 to the University of Washington. The project period is 9/30/98-8/31/03.
  - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
    - \$96,500 to Public Health – Seattle and King County. The project period is 9/30/00-9/29/02.
  - Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
    - \$499,983 to the King County Department of Community and Human Services. The project period is 9/30/00-9/29/03.
- FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant received in Seattle:<sup>15</sup>
  - \$300,000 to the King County Superior Court. The money will be used as an enhancement grant.
- There were no Seattle recipients of the FY 2002 Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Methamphetamine Grant.<sup>16</sup>
- FY 2001 Office of Justice Programs and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Grant amounts received in Seattle:<sup>17</sup>
  - Discretionary - \$19,852,941
  - Formula - \$9,525,174

- No grantees in Seattle received funding in FY 2001 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Federally Assisted Low-Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants.<sup>18</sup>

### **Crime and Drug-Related Crime**

- From January to November 2002, there were 1,923 drug abuse violations known to the police in Seattle. During all of 2001, there were 1,993 drug violations known to police.<sup>19</sup>

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Select Offenses, Seattle, 1999-November 2002

<b>Offenses</b>	<b>Full year 1999</b>	<b>Full year 2000</b>	<b>Full year 2001</b>	<b>Jan.-Nov. 2002</b>
Murder	45	36	25	31
Rape	188	181	164	139
Robbery	1,642	1,653	1,594	1,453
Aggravated assault	2,291	2,463	2,367	2,185
Burglary	6,469	6,157	6,684	6,605
Theft	30,485	26,424	26,502	24,075
Motor vehicle theft	8,640	8,386	8,755	7,427
Arson	163	172	216	196
Drug abuse violations	1,909	2,170	1,993	1,923

- During 2001, 63.6% of adult male arrestees in Seattle tested positive for illicit drugs. 35.1% tested positive for marijuana, 32.1% tested positive for cocaine, 11.1% tested positive for methamphetamine, 10.3% tested positive for opiates, and 1.8% tested positive for PCP. Approximately 23% of the arrestees tested positive for multiple drugs.<sup>20</sup>
- More than half (55.6%) of the adult male arrestees reported using marijuana within the past year. The arrestees used marijuana an average of 9 days within the past month.<sup>21</sup>

Past Drug Use Among Adult Male Arrestees, Seattle, 2001

<b>Use</b>	<b>Crack Cocaine</b>	<b>Powder Cocaine</b>	<b>Mari- juana</b>	<b>Meth- amphet.</b>	<b>Opiates</b>
Past 7 days	20.7%	8.6%	37.9%	11.5%	8.8%
Past 30 days	24.3%	12.0%	46.9%	14.2%	11.0%
Past year	28.6%	17.8%	55.6%	17.7%	13.3%
Avg. # of days used in month	8.1	5.9	9.0	8.3	10.6

- In 1999, 65.9% of adult male arrestees and 69.8% of adult female arrestees tested positive for drug use at the time of arrest.<sup>22</sup>

Percent of Adult Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs by Offense, Seattle, 1999

Offense	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth.		PCP		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	28.3	16.7	41.7	30.6	10.6	2.8	1.7	0.0	59.4	44.4
Property	40.1	55.2	37.0	27.6	10.4	5.7	1.6	0.0	74.0	71.3
Drug	48.0	65.9	49.6	34.1	15.4	24.4	2.4	2.4	85.4	95.1
Sales	100.0	--	0.0	--	0.0	--	0.0	--	100.0	-
Possess.	47.5	65.9	50.0	34.1	15.6	24.4	2.5	2.4	85.2	95.1
Prostitution	37.5	72.4	12.5	20.7	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	62.5	82.8
Other	30.7	48.7	37.2	29.5	9.3	14.1	1.6	1.3	63.5	70.5

## Drugs

### ➤ Cocaine

While adolescents are the predominant crack sellers in Seattle, young adults (ages 18-30) and older adults (over age 30) are the predominant users. Some crack cocaine users ingest benzodiazepines to “take the edge off.”<sup>23</sup> Crack cocaine sells for \$100 per gram and is 40-85% pure. Crack is typically sold in \$2, \$5, or \$10 rocks.<sup>24</sup> Powder cocaine prices range from \$500 to \$1,000 per ounce for 57-68% pure product. A gram of powder cocaine sells for \$35 to \$50.<sup>25</sup> Anal use of powder cocaine is a new phenomenon being reported in Seattle.<sup>26</sup>

### ➤ Heroin

According to law enforcement sources, heroin is widely available in Seattle and heroin use is spreading to the Seattle suburbs. Some heroin users also use additional substances such as benzodiazepines, marijuana, and cocaine. Heroin and powder cocaine are sometimes injected simultaneously; heroin and crack are sometimes smoked sequentially. Sequential swallowing of clonazepam or alprozolam with heroin has also been reported.<sup>27</sup> An emerging group of heroin users is taking methamphetamine in combination with the heroin. One dose (0.1 gram) of Mexican black tar heroin found in Seattle is 14-58% pure and costs \$90-\$120.<sup>28</sup> There are occasional reports of high quality heroin found at local needle exchanges.<sup>29</sup>

### ➤ Marijuana

Adolescents (ages 13-17) and young adults (ages 18-30) are the most likely age groups to use marijuana.<sup>30</sup> From Fall 2001 to Spring 2002, hydroponic and BC bud have increased in availability in Seattle, while Mexican marijuana has decreased in availability.<sup>31</sup> Prices associated with local hydroponically grown marijuana are \$15-\$25 per gram, \$40-\$50 per 1/8 ounce, and \$325-\$400 per ounce.<sup>32</sup> One pound of Mexican marijuana costs \$500-\$700, one pound of BC bud costs \$2,800-\$3,000, and 100 starter plants cost \$1,500.<sup>33</sup> THC levels of marijuana found in Seattle are 2-3% per pound of Mexican; 12-18% per pound of domestic indoor hydroponic; and 15-25% per pound of BC bud.<sup>34</sup>

### ➤ Methamphetamine

The use of methamphetamine has increased in Seattle. Young adults are the most common age group to use methamphetamine in Seattle. Law enforcement has noticed a decrease in purity of Mexican methamphetamine, due to an increase in dilution with methylsulfonyl-methane (MSM).<sup>35</sup> Locally produced methamphetamine is now more pure than Mexican methamphetamine.<sup>36</sup> One gram of methamphetamine usually costs

\$20-\$60 and is 75-95% pure.<sup>37</sup> Additional methamphetamine prices for Seattle/King County are \$350-\$650 for one ounce and \$4,250-\$6,000 per pound.<sup>38</sup>

➤ Club Drugs

MDMA prices are lower at raves than in the community. MDMA pills sell for \$10-\$20 at raves and \$20-\$30 on the street. Fraudulent MDMA substitutions (specifically hormone replacement pills) have been reported in Seattle. GHB sells for \$100 for 100 dosage units. One dose of LSD sells for \$5.<sup>39</sup>

➤ Other Drugs

According to the local DEA, hydrocodone is the most commonly diverted narcotic in the Seattle area. Most of the methadone sold illicitly is in tablet form and costs \$0.50 per milligram.<sup>40</sup> The availability of diverted OxyContin has increased in Seattle from Fall 2001 to Spring 2002. Doctors and pharmacists are increasingly involved in selling diverted OxyContin.<sup>41</sup>

### Juveniles

- Among Seattle public school students surveyed in 2002, 27% of the twelfth graders reported using marijuana within the past month.<sup>42</sup>

Percent of Public School Students Reporting Past Month Drug Use, Seattle, 2002

Drug Type and Use	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Alcohol	8.7%	23.1%	36.2%	47.9%
Marijuana	2.4	12.6	21.9	27.0
Cigarettes	4.1	10.7	16.8	26.7
Chewing tobacco	2.7	3.1	3.6	3.9
Inhalants	5.8	6.0	1.7	2.1
Hallucinogens	0.9	1.8	2.3	3.6
Cocaine	1.0	1.7	1.3	1.7

- Approximately 53% of twelfth graders reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes.<sup>43</sup>

Percent of Public School Students Reporting Lifetime Drug Use, Seattle, 2002

Drug Type and Use	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Alcohol	22.3%	45.8%	59.4%	70.7%
Marijuana	5.6	23.9	41.8	52.5
Cigarettes	15.1	31.1	43.5	54.2
Chewing tobacco	4.7	7.2	8.4	14.6
Inhalants	13.2	14.0	7.9	8.8
Hallucinogens	1.4	3.7	7.3	14.9
Cocaine	2.0	3.6	4.0	5.6

- More than half of the Seattle twelfth graders reported having a favorable attitude toward drug use.<sup>44</sup>

### Percent of Students Reporting Antisocial Behavior Within Past Year, Seattle, 2002

Situation	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Got high or drunk at school	6.2%	13.9%	24.2%	28.1%
Favorable attitude toward drug use	36.4	43.1	48.6	50.4
Low perceived risk of drug use	32.9	49.8	45.7	47.1
Sold illegal drugs at school	2.0	7.4	11.0	11.7

### Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2001, there were 1,799 full-time law enforcement employees in Seattle. Of these employees, 1,287 were officers and 512 were civilians.<sup>45</sup>
- Seattle/King County Drug Involved Offender Task Force<sup>46</sup>  
The Drug Involved Offender Task Force evaluates the current policies that govern chemical dependency treatment services for offenders. The task force recommends a system with appropriate measures of punishment and treatment for offenders in order to affect offender behavioral change, reduce recidivism, and enhance public safety.
- King County/Seattle Emergency Service Patrol<sup>47</sup>  
The Emergency Service Patrol provides screening for publicly inebriated persons in the downtown Seattle area and transports individuals to appropriate service agencies. The Patrol responds to calls from 9-1-1 emergency dispatch system.
- Northwest HIDTA initiatives found in Seattle/King County include the following:<sup>48</sup>
  - Community Coalitions Support Initiative: This initiative provides resources to substance abuse prevention coalitions in each Northwest HIDTA county in order to develop a region-wide demand reduction strategy.
  - Drug Court Development: This initiative provides resources to drug court programs in each Northwest HIDTA county.
  - Public Education/Awareness Initiative: This initiative provides information to the media, parents, teachers, health professionals and others in the community about the drugs found in the Northwest HIDTA area, especially marijuana and methamphetamine.

### Trafficking and Seizures

- After September 11, 2002, the availability of illegal drugs, particularly heroin and cocaine, declined in Seattle due to increased border security.<sup>49</sup>
- More than 300 small islands provide Washington with over 3,000 miles of international shoreline increasing the maritime smuggling potential.<sup>50</sup>
- Shipments of Asian heroin often transit through Puget Sound's commercial port facilities.<sup>51</sup>
- From January through October 2002, the Washington State Department of Ecology reported 203 methamphetamine lab incidents in King County. During all of 2001, there were 271 incidents reported. This is up from 207 incidents reported in 2000 and 107 incidents reported in 1999. A methamphetamine lab incident refers to the number of drug labs and dump sites reported to authorities.<sup>52</sup>
- In 2000, the King County Sheriff's Office Drug Enforcement Unit seized more than 11,000 grams of methamphetamine.<sup>53</sup>

### Drug Enforcement Unit Statistics, King County Sheriff's Office, 1997-2000

	1997*	1998	1999	2000
Felonies	246	142	219	200
Search warrants	45	36	24	35
Marijuana grows	6	5	7	11
Clandestine labs	20	43	60	135
Heroin	<i>588 grams</i>	5,901 grams	1,774 grams	478 grams
Methamphetamine	<i>11,925 grams</i>	5,432 grams	8,769 grams	11,049 grams
Cocaine	<i>2,459 grams</i>	16,213 grams	4,196 grams	7,749 grams
Cash seizures	<i>\$183,296</i>	\$589,039	\$414,374	\$242,114
Value of property seized	\$1.85 million	\$1.73 million	\$1.25 million	\$1.4 million
Vehicle seizures	28	66	56	62

\* Statistics in italics for 1997 are incomplete

### Courts

#### ➤ Drug Courts<sup>54</sup>

As of January 8, 2003, there were two drug courts in Seattle that have been operating for over two years and one additional drug court was being planned.

### Corrections

- The total adult secure population for the King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention facilities was 2,225 on December 1, 2002.<sup>55</sup>

### Consequences of Use

- There are approximately 12,000-15,000 injection drug users in Seattle and King County. Up to 85% of injection drug users in King County may be infected with Hepatitis C.<sup>56</sup>
- From 1999 to 2001, there were 5 MDMA-related deaths in Seattle/King County. All of the deceased were Caucasian and between the ages of 15 and 28.<sup>57</sup>
- During the fourth quarter of 2001, there were 32 drug deaths in Seattle/King County. Opiates that do not fall within the heroin/morphine category were identified in 16 of the deaths.<sup>58</sup>

### Drugs Identified in Drug Caused Deaths, Seattle/King County, 2001

Drug Identified	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Cocaine	16	13	16	4
Heroin/morphine	18	16	17	10
Other opiates	15	14	10	16
Amphetamines	2	1	1	1
Depressants	19	13	10	6
Alcohol	10	9	9	4
Antidepressants	13	14	5	14
Total drug deaths	47	39	35	32



- During 2001, there were 146 drug-related deaths reported to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) by Medical Examiners (ME) in Seattle/King County.<sup>59</sup>

Number of Drug Deaths/Mentions, Select Drugs, Seattle/King County, 1997-2001

Drug category	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Alcohol-in-combination	74	95	61	71	32
Cocaine	65	68	76	88	44
Heroin/morphine	110	142	117	102	63
Marijuana	--	1	--	1	--
Amphetamines	2	--	1	1	--
Methamphetamine	3	3	28	12	6
Club drugs	--	--	1	2	3
Hallucinogens	--	--	--	--	--
Inhalants	--	--	--	1	--
Narcotic analgesics	31	49	21	53	57
Other analgesics	20	11	13	21	11
Benzodiazepines	26	37	15	20	20
Antidepressants	40	63	48	59	66
All other substances	34	50	36	34	50
Total drug abuse deaths	169	215	199	215	146
Total drug mentions	405	519	417	465	352

- Preliminary estimates for January to June 2002 indicate that there were 2,656 drug-related episodes reported by emergency departments (ED) in Seattle. Cocaine was mentioned 551 times in the January to June 2002 episodes.<sup>60</sup>

Number of ED Drug Mentions and Episodes, Selected Drugs, Seattle, 1998-June 2002

Drug category	Full Year 1998	Full Year 1999	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	Jan.-June 2002
Alcohol-in-combin.	2,221	2,228	3,173	3,145	800
Cocaine	2,399	2,519	3,338	3,409	551
Heroin	2,421	2,470	2,490	1,927	475
Marijuana	936	808	1,414	1,596	298
Amphetamines	293	345	640	699	104
Methamphetamine	266	353	540	395	115
MDMA (ecstasy)	19	32	128	115	20
Ketamine	0	3	4	1	0
LSD	94	121	107	62	5
PCP	47	47	116	128	17
Miscell. hallucin.	45	48	37	72	11
Rohypnol	--	1	0	0	0
GHB	17	34	57	39	7
Inhalants	6	16	12	15	0
Total drug episodes	8,327	8,424	11,115	11,495	2,656
Total drug mentions	13,914	13,854	18,974	19,818	4,718

## Treatment

- Treatment sources in Seattle report that funding for treatment has been reduced, resulting in a decrease in slot capacity and an increase in waiting lists.<sup>61</sup>
- With a decrease in the availability of illicit drugs after September 11, 2001, there was a 20% increase in admissions to Seattle's methadone and treatment clinics.<sup>62</sup>
- From July to December 2001, there were 4,208 admissions to alcohol/drug treatment in Seattle/King County. Marijuana was reported as the primary drug of abuse in 819 of the admissions.<sup>63</sup>

Number of Admissions to Alcohol/Drug Treatment, Seattle/King County, 1999-2001

Primary Drug	Jan-June 1999	July-Dec 1999	Jan-June 2000	July-Dec 2000	Jan-June 2001	July-Dec 2001
Alcohol*	1,910	2,331	2,130	1,935	1,951	1,745
Methamphetamine	240	299	369	422	425	422
Cocaine	583	752	731	666	649	501
Hallucinogens	8	9	18	13	14	9
Heroin	732	956	1032	929	636	606
Marijuana	763	958	1119	948	986	819
Other opiates/synthetics	43	40	36	40	41	54
Other	47	37	40	33	36	52

\*Alcohol includes alcohol alone and in combination with other drugs

- Dutch Shisler Sobering Support Center<sup>64</sup>  
Located in downtown Seattle, the Dutch Shisler Sobering Support Center serves chronic public inebriates and others in need of a safe place to recover from the acute effects of alcohol and drug intoxication. Services provided by the Center include the following: Emergency Safety Patrol van transportation to and from the facility; triage for determination of medical emergencies; sober housing for sleeping off the effects of alcohol or other drugs; and intensive case management services. Clients typically remain at the facility for 8-14 hours per visit. The Center has the capacity to serve 60 clients at any one time and serves approximately 1,000 people each year.

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> Seattle Mayor's Web site: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/mayor/>

<sup>3</sup> Seattle City Council Web site: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/council/>

<sup>4</sup> Seattle Police Department Web site: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/>

<sup>5</sup> King County Sheriff's Office Web site: <http://www.metrokc.gov/sheriff/>

<sup>6</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nw.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nw.html)

<sup>7</sup> Seattle and King County Department of Public Health, Project LINK Web site: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/atodp/link.htm>

<sup>8</sup> King County Department of Community and Health Services, Chronic Public Inebriate Systems Solution Workgroup Web site: <http://www.metrokc.gov/dchs/mhd/cpi-home.htm>

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- <sup>9</sup> National Crime Prevention Council, Comprehensive Communities Program:  
<http://www.ncpc.org/5part3dc.htm>
- <sup>10</sup> Seattle and King County Department of Public Health, *Recent Drug Abuse Trends in the Seattle-King County Area*, December 2001: [http://depts.washington.edu/adai/pubs/tr/cewg/CEWG\\_Seattle\\_1201.pdf](http://depts.washington.edu/adai/pubs/tr/cewg/CEWG_Seattle_1201.pdf)
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- <sup>12</sup> Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, SafeFutures: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/safefutures/>
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- <sup>18</sup> Department of Housing and Urban Development, *FY 2001 Federally Assisted Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants: Detailed Congressional Report*:  
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- <sup>19</sup> Seattle Police Department, Crime Statistics: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/crime/default.htm>
- <sup>20</sup> National Institute of Justice, *Drug Use and Related Matters Among Adult Arrestees, 2001*:  
<http://www.adam-nij.net/files/adam2001.PDF>
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1999 Annual Report on Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, June 2000:  
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